

We should mention that the numerous illustrations, though not original, are taken from a variety of sources, many of which are not very easily accessible, and a considerable number from American periodicals.

There is much work still to be done in entomology, and as each generation of entomologists starts with far greater facilities for work than their predecessors have enjoyed, it is from the younger entomologists, like Mr. Carpenter, that we may confidently expect a large increase of our knowledge of the insect-world.

*Cries and Call-notes of Birds: with Musical Illustrations.*

By C. A. WITCHELL. Svo. Upcott Gill, 1899.

THE study which Mr. Witchell has for years past devoted to the songs and notes of birds, and his musical training, have fitted him beyond all other ornithologists to produce a reliable popular work on the subject.

To those who have read with pleasure Mr. Witchell's most fascinating book 'The Evolution of Bird-Song,' the present more modest little work will be welcome; it occupies only eighty pages, but these are crowded with information. The effort to record the Nightingale's song in musical notation is a marvel of patient effort and indomitable pluck on the part of the author. We would recommend all lovers of British birds to spend a shilling in securing this valuable addition to their libraries.

MISCELLANEOUS.

*Parthenogenesis.* By THOMAS MEEHAN.

It is about two hundred years ago since Camerarius recorded the fact that female mulberries and other trees would produce fruit without pollinization, though such fruit was sterile. These observations have since been abundantly confirmed. The necessity of pollen to fertile seed came to be regarded as absolute law until some fifty years ago, when the Curator at Kew, Mr. John Smith, announced that an Australian plant of which he had but one female specimen perfected its seeds. It proved to be a new Euphorbiaceæ, and he named it *Celebogyne ilicifolia*—the generic name from its supposed parthenogenetal character.

The author of this paper was a student in Kew at that time, and well remembers the incredulity with which the announcement was received, that nature should seem to make a universal law in relation to method of reproduction, and yet make a striking exception in this case. Nature furnishes infinite variation, but these variations seem to be only of one general plan. It seemed more probable that, in some method unexplained, pollen had been formed, and really pollinated the embryo. It does not appear that any further observations on this plant were made at Kew, or, if made, recorded.

Strasburger took up the subject again in 1878; but though my good friend Mr. George Nicholson, Curator of Kew, writes under date of April 10, 1897, that "the whole business has been threshed out by Strasburger," the latter seems to be more concerned about